Diking or filling has destroyed approximately 90 percent of the original tidal wetlands of San Francisco Bay. The San Francisco District of the US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is one of many agencies working to reverse this trend by restoring large areas of former tidal salt marsh. There are several different programs that are used by the Corps to facilitate restoration of estuaries and wetlands.

The Corps' involvement in ecosystem restoration projects focuses on ecological resources and processes associated with the hydrologic regime of the system. The goal of such work is restoration rather than mitigation; the Corps would not implement an ecosystem restoration activity that results in treating or abating pollution problems caused by others. Federal contributions can come in the form of technical assistance (no construction funding) or as part of our Ecosystem Restoration mission area (with potential construction funding). The Corps is also responsible for regulating various construction activities that involve structures or work including wetland restoration projects, that either modify navigable waters or involve placement of dredged material or fill into waters of the U.S.

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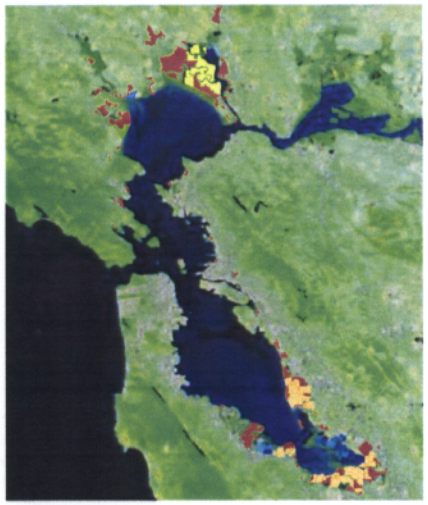
The Role of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Estuarine Restoration

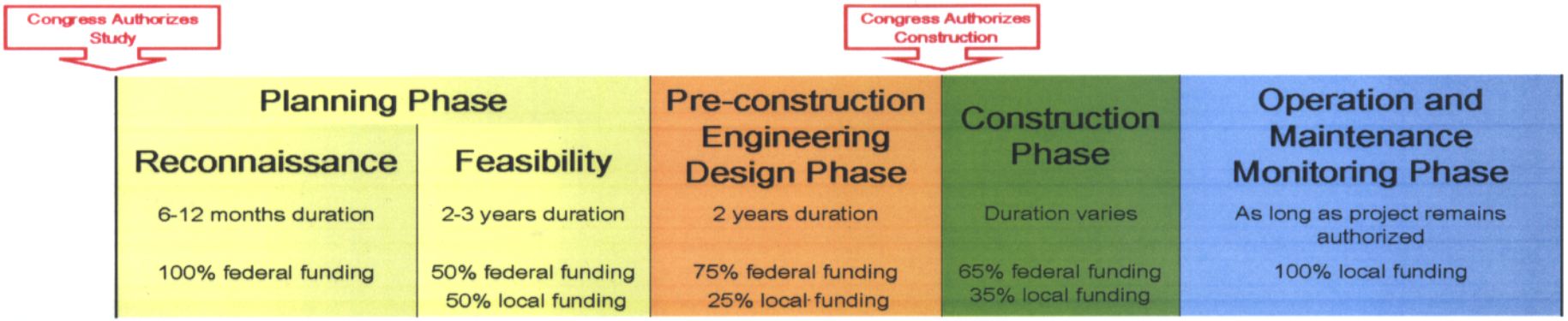
The Process Explained



Corps projects around the San Francisco Bay include Hamilton Army Airfield, Sonoma Baylands, Napa River Salt Marsh, and South San Francisco Bay Shoreline.

CORPS PROCESS

The Corps utilizes a four-phase approach for implementation of projects. The project development, or Planning Phase, is a two-step Reconnaissance and Feasibility Phase. The Reconnaissance Phase is where problems are identified and determination of Federal interest is made. The project then moves to the Feasibility Phase where the problems and opportunities are fully defined and following evaluation of economic and environmental effects of alternatives a plan is recommended. Technical and design studies are conducted during the Pre-construction Engineering and Design Phase (PED). Following congressional authorization and receipt of Construction General funds, the Construction Phase commences. Once the project is completed, it is turned over to the local sponsor for routine operation and maintenance. Depending on the project type and costs, as described below, congressional authorization and cost sharing requirements will vary.



CORPS PROGRAMS

Individually Authorized Studies and Projects:

Individually Authorized Studies are the most common route by which the Corps gets involved in community water resource solutions. The first phases of these projects are commonly known as General Investigations (GIs). In this approach, Congress must authorize both a feasibility study and implementation of the project. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor share the study costs (50% Fed, 50% local) and construction costs (typically 65% Fed, 35% local); Operation and Maintenance costs are solely the local sponsor's responsibility. There are no Federal cost limitations for this kind of project. Target project timing and typical cost sharing are shown above.

Continuing Authorities Program (CAP):

CAP is a streamlined process for smaller projects with smaller budgets than the Individually Authorized Projects. Congressional authorization already exists for the Corps to administer CAP. Restoration studies under this program are initially financed entirely with Federal funds; study costs are included in the total project costs, which are shared if and when the project is implemented. Local project cost shares range from 25% to 35% depending on the type of restoration project. CAP projects that deal with estuarine restoration are as follows:

Beneficial Uses of Dredged Material must not result in environmental degradation and must be cost-justified by the benefits. The use of dredged material from Federal projects to protect, restore or create aquatic habitat is authorized by Section 204 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1992. Existing policy requires that Corps projects use the least cost method of disposal. If this is not the case for reuse projects, the non-Federal sponsor is responsible for 25% of the additional costs of disposal.

Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration is authorized by Section 206 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996. Under this authority, work may be done on aquatic restoration projects that will improve the quality of the environment, are in the public interest, and are cost-effective, but need not be associated with an existing Corps project. The federal share is limited to $5 million and the non-federal share is 35%. Program limits may be raised for both Project Modifications for Improvement of the Environment (Section 1135) and for Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration (Section 206) if pending legislation is passed.

Project Modifications for Improvement of the Environment, authorized by Section 1135 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, provides for modifications in the structures and operations of projects constructed by the Corps or where those projects have contributed to degradation. The goal of these projects is ecosystem restoration, emphasizing projects that benefit fish and wildlife. The Act specifies that the Federal share of each project, including studies, plans and specifications, and construction, may not exceed $5 million. A non-Federal sponsor must provide 25% of the cost of the project.